SUBJECTS.

34. *Effects of the recent enhancement of the tax on waste lands granted for coffee cultivation.*

Mr. D. G. Cameron of Quilon (Member, Nominated) said that, although the question of reimposing the land tax at twelve annas an acre on all waste lands granted for coffee cultivation seemed to have been definitely decided on by Government, he would make one or two remarks as one representing the owners of the bulk of the uncultivated lands granted under the Coffee Land rules. Government had been so liberal and sympathetic in their dealings with the planters in the past that it was their hope that Government would be pleased to postpone the application of the new tax for some time longer. He himself had paid about Rs. 20,000, or Rs. 30,000, during the past 25 years, as tax on behalf of owners who had not received one penny in return. Others had paid an equal amount, or at least some Rs. 2,000 a year, the bulk, if not the whole, of which would be lost to Government, if the enhanced rate were enforced. One Company which he represented, who owned over 6,000 acres, lost about 50 lakhs of rupees when coffee went out of cultivation. The Strathmore Estate, in opening and planting which about £50,000 had been spent, gave one crop of the value of £ 3,000 and then died out. That would show how rapid and how deadly the coffee disease was in its effects. The Company and others similarly situated continued year by year to pay the small tax of 2 as. per acre in the hope of some day being in a position to replant their land. The tax of 12 as. now proposed to be levied they would be unable to pay, and the result would be that lands which were of no use for forest purposes would revert to Government, the large trees, if any were left, being inaccessible. For such estates as were under cultivation, the tax of 12 annas was a reasonable and equitable one and no objection could be made to it. The Member added that the views he expressed did not represent those of the entire planting community and that the facts mentioned by him applied only to a proportion of the land affected.

Dewan's reply.—The order raising the tax on coffee lands was passed after careful consideration. His Highness' Government are not prepared to exempt any area from the operation of the enhanced tax.

35. *Damage caused by wild elephants to estates.*

Mr. J. Carson Parker (Member, South Travancore Planters' Association) said that he wished to move the attention of Government to the havoc caused by wild elephants in some planting districts. In one estate near Shencottah, the elephants were constantly harassing the owners and several rubber plants, three and four years old, were destroyed. He requested that Government might

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